



## **Draft Purpose and Need Summary**

### **Tier 2, I-69 Section 2**

**August 18, 2005**

This document describes the project goals for Section 2 of the Tier 2 I-69 Evansville-to-Indianapolis Study. Section 2 begins at SR 64 west of Oakland City and continues northward to US 50, east of Washington. This section of the I-69 project extends through Gibson, Pike and Daviess Counties, Indiana, and is approximately 29 miles in length. The study area for Section 2 includes Knox, Pike, Daviess, Gibson, Martin, and Dubois Counties.

### **2.1 *Statement of Purpose and Need***

The Purpose and Need identified in Tier 1 for the I-69 Evansville-to-Indianapolis project has been carried forward into Tier 2 and remains the foundation of the Purpose and Need for each Tier 2 Section. The only modification in the Tier 2 Purpose and Need is the identification of goals specific to a particular Tier 2 Section.

#### **2.1.1 Tier 1 Purpose and Need for I-69 from Evansville to Indianapolis**

The Tier 1 FEIS determined that the purpose for building I-69 between Evansville and Indianapolis is to provide an improved transportation link between the two communities that:

- ? strengthens the transportation network in southwest Indiana,
- ? supports economic development in southwest Indiana, and
- ? completes the portion on the National I-69 Project between Evansville and Indianapolis.

See Table 2.1 of the Tier 1 FEIS for specific goals that were identified in Tier 1 that support the overall purpose.

#### **2.1.2 Tier 2 Purpose and Need for Section 2**

The purpose for building Section 2 is to advance the overall goals of the I-69 Evansville-to-Indianapolis project in a manner consistent with the Tier 1 Record of Decision (ROD)



commitments, while also addressing local needs identified in the Tier 2 process. The Section 2 local needs identified in Tier 2 include:

- ? Complete Section 2 of I-69 between SR 64 west of Oakland City to US 50 east of Washington
- ? Increase personal accessibility for area residents
- ? Reduce existing and forecasted traffic congestion
- ? Improve traffic safety
- ? Support local economic development initiatives

## **2.2 Transportation Plans and Policies**

### **2.2.1 Federal Legislation and Policies**

A highway corridor from Indianapolis, Indiana to Memphis, Tennessee, via Evansville, Indiana, called “Corridor 18,” was designated as a high-priority in the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) that Congress passed in 1991. This corridor was listed in the National Highway System Designation Act of 1995 and the Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21), as “Interstate Route I-69,” in 1998.

### **2.2.2 State Legislation and Policies**

A 1991 state law directed INDOT to designate a system of Commerce Corridors to serve the State’s major economic centers, and INDOT identified a Commerce Corridor connecting Evansville to Indianapolis via Bloomington as part of the statewide network of Commerce Corridors. INDOT’s 2000-2025 Long-Range Plan identifies a statewide network, which includes a Statewide Mobility Corridor link from Evansville to Indianapolis via Bloomington.

### **2.2.3 Metropolitan Transportation Plans**

Gibson County receives planning assistance from the Evansville Urban Transportation Study (EUTS) through an agreement with INDOT. EUTS adopted a *2030 Transportation Plan Update* for the Evansville-Henderson metropolitan area in 2003. This plan update includes I-69 in its list of recommended transportation projects in Gibson County that will address the plan’s transportation goals and objectives, which includes a comprehensive transportation system that



“moves people and goods safely, . . . coordinates land use and transportation planning, . . . [and] preserves and enhances the character of the environment (p. 2-1 & 2-2).” This plan update includes I-69 (from SR 64 to SR 50) in its list of recommended transportation projects (project G-4) in Gibson County. Regarding the recommended projects, the plan notes they will “individually, and as a whole, reduce congestion, increase mobility, and enhance safety, within the rural counties in the EUTS regional planning area. The recommended projects will provide the foundation for development of a transportation network with improved access for the urban areas and industrial developments to the major roadways in the region.”.

### **2.2.4 Other Local Plans and Studies**

The Southwest Indiana Development Council (SWIDC) *Gateway to Southwest Indiana* website (<http://www.swidc.org/>) includes proposed I-69 among the area’s important transportation features, citing “relative accessibility to interstate transportation” as “key” to “solid economic development.” The website references an “excellent transportation system in Southwest Indiana” that is “slated to get even better in the foreseeable future with the addition of I-69.” SWIDC is a regional economic development organization comprised of representatives from 13 counties in southwest Indiana, including Daviess, Pike, and Gibson.

Daviess County is a member of the Southern Indiana Development Commission (SIDC), which is focused, among other things, on economic development, transportation, and community development. Pike County is a member of the Indiana 15 Regional Planning Commission, which has prepared items such as a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and economic development opportunity maps for the member counties. Indiana 15’s 2004 Annual Report includes the following objective: “link population centers by strategic planning for Interstate 69” under the transportation goal “to promote the effective flow of people and materials within the district (unpaged-numbered sheets).” Gibson County is a member of the Southwestern Indiana Regional Development Commission (SWIRDC), which was formed to facilitate multi-county strategic planning and implementation of economic development projects, including a tourism strategy and a cultural master plan. The Southwest Indiana 2000 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, which addresses Gibson and other counties, lists among its goals for 2010, “improved access and efficiency of transportation including the presence of a north-south interstate route and improved access to neighboring states (p. 9).” The report further states: “the Regional Strategy Committee supports the extension of I-69 through the southwest region and views this project as a critical component to a positive economic future in the region; [and] a well-aligned and efficient north-south interstate should be viewed as a strategic asset to the entire regional community (p.12).”



## **2.3 Needs Assessment**

### **2.3.1 Completing Section 2 of I-69 between SR 64 west of Oakland City and US Route 50 east of Washington**

Building Section 2 of I-69 responds to the congressional policy to complete the National I-69 corridor. The congressional decision to designate I-69 as a “high priority corridor” was based on corridor feasibility studies and reflects a national commitment to complete this new interstate corridor as part of the National Highway System.

### **2.3.2 Personal Accessibility**

The city of Washington and Daviess County desire to accommodate strong travel desires and provide good access to the community, as well as facilitate improved emergency access through additional interchanges. To meet this goal they support building an interchange at US 50 and endorse building a South Washington interchange tying to SR 57 about two miles south of the US 50 bypass.

The *Pike County Endorsed Plan of I-69 Interchanges* (pp.1-3) expresses a need for interchanges to serve existing and proposed industrial land use activities that generate heavy truck traffic in the area and to divert this traffic from the heart of the Petersburg community. The Plan endorses a Petersburg interchange at SR 61 and calls for developing two additional interchanges: one north and one south of Petersburg. This plan has been endorsed by the Pike County Industrial Development and Education Alliance, the Pike County Economic Growth & Development Council, and the city of Petersburg Indiana Common Council.

The *Evansville Urban Transportation Study (EUTS) 2030 Transportation Plan* identifies the need for increased mobility for residents of the rural areas of Gibson County. I-69 will substantially increase mobility for residents of the rural communities in the Section 2 area, providing better access to jobs, medical facilities, shopping, and recreation.

Visitors to the Section 2 project office, participants in the Section 2 Public Information Meeting, and Community Advisory Committee members have consistently raised the topic of better access and mobility that interstate access will provide, including specific emphasis on I-69 as key to attracting new jobs to the area.



### **2.3.3 Highway Congestion**

Traffic forecasts for the year 2030 show that, under the No-Build Scenario, the Section 2 corridor will experience congestion on SR 57 at the major towns in Section 2. Segments of SR 57 in Section 2 are forecasted (in the year 2030) to have higher than acceptable traffic congestion north of Oakland City, south of Petersburg, and south of Washington without the project. In addition, SR 57 throughout the Section 2 study area has heavy volumes of truck traffic, generally traveling longer distances. Diverting this traffic to I-69 is expected to decrease, or entirely eliminate, congestion on SR 57.

### **2.3.4 Highway Safety**

The safety analysis conducted for the Tier 1 study identified many rural counties and rural highways in southwest Indiana as having above average crash rates for serious crashes.<sup>1</sup> Both Pike and Daviess Counties have crash rates well above the statewide average for rural counties. I-69 is expected to result in diversion of traffic, including particularly heavy truck traffic, from other, less safe, rural highways to a safer freeway facility.

### **2.3.5 Local Economic Development**

The counties that will be served by Section 2 clearly need increased economic activity given their distressed economic conditions. The Pike County Economic Growth & Development Council is working to locate industrial facilities on the north side of Petersburg in Pike County that will increase the number of jobs in the area. Also, the city of Petersburg has considered ways to capitalize on the added visitors that I-69 will bring by encouraging additional craft activities, downtown storefront enhancements, and themed special events. Similarly, the city of Washington in Daviess County is focused on capturing economic development with I-69 access.

Discussions with Section 2 business and property owners have indicated that they anticipate benefits to their businesses as a result of the construction of I-69. Some of the business owners have said that they may expand their businesses should the anticipated increase in customers be realized.

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<sup>1</sup> A “serious” crash is one resulting in at least one fatality or serious injury.



### **2.4 Public and Agency Input**

Public involvement and coordination with regulatory agencies has been extensive and ongoing since the beginning of the Tier 1 process, and is continuing through the Tier 2 study process. To date, an open house and a public information meeting have been held with the general public. Members of the project team have and continue to speak to civic and local organizations, and have met with elected officials, EMS personnel, businesses, economic development organizations and visitors to the project office. In the first year alone, over 300 stakeholders have visited the Section 2 project office. Three Community Advisory Committee Meetings have been held during the same time period. Throughout this early process several local interests have been identified as worthy of consideration during the Section 2, Tier 2 study including:

- ? Interchanges should be located to support future economic development growth and to divert heavy truck traffic from local roads
- ? Tourism opportunities should be emphasized

Among the items discussed with CAC members is providing interchanges to support economic development and the potential for developing a cultural-tourism center at the US 50/I-69 interchange to draw tourism into the region.

### **2.5 Project Goals and Performance Measures**

Each of the alternatives considered in the Tier 2 study is essentially equal in terms of its ability to meet the broad regional objectives contained in the Tier 1 Purpose and Need Statement. Therefore, the transportation performance measures used in Tier 2 address the ability of the alternatives to meet local goals. These performance measures will be evaluated along with project impacts and costs in selecting a preferred Section 2 build alternative. It is very possible that these other relevant factors (impacts and costs) will have a more significant role than performance measures in selecting an alternative in Section 2.

Performance measures associated with each goal have been developed to help in evaluating the alternative Section 2 alignments and in selecting a preferred alignment. The evaluation of Section 2 alternatives will consider other relevant factors, including environmental impacts, social and economic impacts, etc., in addition to the performance measures. Section 2 goals and their performance measures are summarized in Table 1.

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**TABLE 1—SECTION 2 GOALS AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

TIER 1	TIER 2 Section 2	
	Section 2 Goals	Section 2 Performance Measures
<b>GOAL 1</b> —Improve the transportation linkage between Evansville and Indianapolis  <b>GOAL 8</b> —Facilitate interstate and international movement of freight  <b>GOAL 9</b> —Connect I-69 to major intermodal facilities in southwest Indiana	GOAL 1—Complete Section 2 of I-69 between SR 64 east of Oakland City to US Route 50 west of Washington	G1-A—Development of a freeway which meets current needs
GOAL 2—Improve personal accessibility for southwest Indiana residents	GOAL 2—Enhance the transportation network in the Section 2 Study Area to improve personal accessibility for residents of the area	G2-A—Increase in access of area communities to the I-69 corridor
		G2-B—Reduction in travel time to regional destinations (Indianapolis)
GOAL 3—Reduce existing and forecasted traffic congestion on the highway network in southwest Indiana	GOAL 3—Reduce existing and forecasted traffic congestion on the highway network in the Section 2 Study Area	G3-A—Reduction in congestion on rural roadways.
GOAL 4—Improve safety levels in southwest Indiana	GOAL 4—Reduce crashes on local and state roads in the Section 2 Study Area	G4-A—Reduction in the number of crashes in the Section 2 Study Area
		G4-B—Reduction in the percentage of trucks on local roads
<b>GOAL 5</b> —Increase accessibility for southwest Indiana businesses to labor, suppliers, and consumer markets  <b>GOAL 6</b> —Support sustainable, long-term economic growth.  <b>GOAL 7</b> —Support economic development to benefit a wide spectrum of area residents.	GOAL 5—Support local economic development initiatives	G5-A—Increase in access of area businesses to the I-69 corridor
		G5-B—Reduction in travel time to regional business centers (Indianapolis, and Terra Haute)
		G5-C—Provision of interchange locations suitable for future development

August 18, 2005







## 2 Purpose and Need

This document describes the project goals for Section 2 of the Tier 2 I-69 Evansville-to-Indianapolis Study. Section 2 begins at SR64 west of Oakland City and continues northward to US 50, east of Washington. This section of the I-69 project extends through Gibson, Pike and Daviess Counties, Indiana, and is approximately 29 miles in length. The study area for Section 2 includes Knox, Pike, Daviess, Gibson, Martin, and Dubois Counties.

This Purpose and Need Statement describes the goals for Section 2, explains how these goals were determined, and introduces the performance measures that will be used to evaluate how well the alternatives meet those goals. This document contains the following five sections, which parallel those in the Tier 1 Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) Chapter 2 – Purpose and Need.

- ? *Section 2.1 – Statement of Purpose and Need* contains the Statement of Purpose and Need for Section 2 of the Tier 2 project.
- ? *Section 2.2 – Transportation Plans and Policies* describes federal, state, and local policies used to determine the Purpose and Need for Section 2.
- ? *Section 2.3 – Needs Assessment* describes the local needs that were identified during the scoping process for Section 2.
- ? *Section 2.4 – Public and Agency Input* summarizes how public and agency input was used to determine the Purpose and Need.
- ? *Section 2.5 – Project Goals and Performance Measures* identifies the local goals, describes how they support the overall project goals identified in Tier 1, and presents the performance measures that will be used to evaluate the alternatives and compare how well they achieve these goals.



### **2.1 Statement of Purpose and Need**

The Purpose and Need identified in Tier 1 for the I-69 Evansville-to-Indianapolis project has been carried forward into Tier 2 and remains the foundation of the Purpose and Need for each Tier 2 Section. The only modification in the Tier 2 Purpose and Need is the identification of goals specific to a particular Tier 2 Section. These local goals have been identified for each Tier 2 Section as part of the scoping process in Tier 2. Therefore, the Purpose and Need for Section 2 consists of two parts: (1) the overall project purpose, as defined in Tier 1 for the I-69 Evansville-to-Indianapolis project, and (2) local goals identified as part of the Tier 2 process.

#### **2.1.1 Tier 1 Purpose and Need for I-69 from Evansville to Indianapolis**

The Tier 1 FEIS determined that the purpose for building I-69 between Evansville and Indianapolis is to provide an improved transportation link between the two communities that

- ? strengthens the transportation network in southwest Indiana,
- ? supports economic development in southwest Indiana, and
- ? completes the portion on the National I-69 Project between Evansville and Indianapolis.

Specific goals were identified in Tier 1 that support this overall purpose. They are as follows, with core goals shown in *italics*.

#### **Transportation Goals**

- Goal 1**     *Improve the transportation linkage between Evansville and Indianapolis*
- Goal 2**     *Improve personal accessibility for southwest Indiana residents*
- Goal 3**     Reduce existing and forecasted traffic congestion on the highway network in southwest Indiana
- Goal 4**     Reduce traffic safety problems



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#### **Economic Development Goals**

- Goal 5**     Increase accessibility for southwest Indiana businesses to labor, suppliers, and consumer markets
- Goal 6**     Support sustainable, long-term economic growth (diversity of employer types)
- Goal 7**     Support economic development to benefit a wide spectrum of area residents (distribution of economic benefits)

#### **National I-69 Goals**

- Goal 8**     *Facilitate interstate and international movement of freight through the I-69 corridor, in a manner consistent with the National I-69 policies*
- Goal 9**     Connect I-69 to major intermodal facilities in southwest Indiana

As defined in Tier 1, the goals of the I-69 Evansville-to-Indianapolis project are regional goals: that is, they are expressed as goals for the entire southwest Indiana region, which includes 26 counties and encompasses a quarter of the State of Indiana. These broad regional goals were used as the basis for evaluating alternatives in Tier 1, when the alternatives analysis involved comparing different corridors that were 140 to 160 miles in length and were spread across a broad geographic area.

#### **2.1.2     Tier 2 Purpose and Need for Section 2**

The purpose for building Section 2 is to advance the overall goals of the I-69 Evansville-to-Indianapolis project in a manner consistent with the Tier 1 Record of Decision (ROD) commitments, while also addressing local needs identified in the Tier 2 process. The Section 2 local needs identified in Tier 2 include:

- ? Complete Section 2 of I-69 between SR 64 west of Oakland City to US 50 east of Washington
- ? Increase personal accessibility for area residents
- ? Reduce existing and forecasted traffic congestion
- ? Improve traffic safety
- ? Support local economic development initiatives



These needs are defined in greater detail below in Section 2.3, *Needs Assessment*. The alternative alignments developed for Section 2 are consistent with the overall goals of Tier 1 and the local needs identified in Tier 2.

## **2.2 Transportation Plans and Policies**

### **2.2.1 Federal Legislation and Policies**

A highway corridor from Indianapolis, Indiana to Memphis, Tennessee, via Evansville, Indiana, called “Corridor 18,” was designated as a high-priority in the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) that Congress passed in 1991. This corridor was extended to the north and south in the National Highway System Designation Act of 1995. The Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21) further modified the corridor in 1998, extending it to provide a continuous link between Canada and Mexico. In addition, TEA-21 designated Corridor 18 as “Interstate Route I-69.” The entire I-69 corridor, from Canada to Mexico, is referred to in this study as the “National I-69 Corridor.”

The National I-69 Corridor was divided into 32 Sections of Independent Utility (SIUs), each considered to be an independent project for purposes of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) reviews and environmental studies. The Evansville-to-Indianapolis section of I-69 was designated as SIU #3 of the National I-69 project.

FHWA issued a Tier 1 Record of Decision (ROD) for the Evansville-to-Indianapolis section of I-69 in March 2004. The Tier 1 ROD selected a “corridor” – that is, a band generally 2,000 feet in width, but narrower in some places and broader in others – for I-69 between Evansville and Indianapolis. In addition, the Tier 1 ROD divided the Evansville-to-Indianapolis project into six separate sections to facilitate more detailed Tier 2 studies. Section 2 is the second section from the south; it extends from SR 64 west of Oakland City to US 50, east of Washington.

### **2.2.2 State Legislation and Policies**

A 1991 state law directed INDOT to designate a system of Commerce Corridors to serve the State’s major economic centers and to specify levels of service that the Commerce Corridor highways are expected to achieve. INDOT identified a Commerce Corridor connecting Evansville to Indianapolis via Bloomington as part of the statewide network of Commerce Corridors.



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INDOT issued its 2000-2025 Long-Range Plan in 2001. The plan identifies a statewide network consisting of three levels of transportation corridors: Statewide Mobility Corridors, Regional Corridors, and Local Access Corridors. The Statewide Mobility Corridors are the highest level of the network and correspond closely to the previously identified Commerce Corridors. The Statewide Mobility Corridors include a link from Evansville to Indianapolis via Bloomington. The Long-Range Plan defines the characteristics of these corridors to include:

- ? Upper level design standards
- ? High speeds
- ? Free flowing conditions
- ? Serving long distance trips
- ? Large through volumes of traffic
- ? Heavy commercial vehicle flows
- ? Serving longer distance commuter trips
- ? Generally multi-lane divided design
- ? Full access control desirable, no less than partial access control
- ? Railroad and highway grade separations desirable
- ? Desirable to bypass congested areas
- ? No interaction with non-motorized vehicles or pedestrians
- ? Major river crossings

The 2000-2025 Long-Range Plan Update also retained the designation of Commerce Corridors and showed a Commerce Corridor connecting Evansville to Indianapolis via Bloomington (with the Evansville-to-Bloomington portion shown as an unbuilt section).

FHWA's March 2004 Tier 1 ROD for I-69 approved completion of I-69 as an interstate from Evansville to Indianapolis, via Bloomington. The ROD-approved route is consistent with the Commerce Corridor and Statewide Mobility Corridor designations in INDOT's long-range plans.

*[Note: INDOT is currently in the process of updating its long-range plan. This section will be updated to describe the latest version of the plan when it becomes available.]*

### **2.2.3 Metropolitan Transportation Plans**

The corridor approved for the I-69 Evansville-to-Indianapolis project in the Tier 1 ROD connects three metropolitan areas: Evansville, Bloomington, and Indianapolis. In 2003, the metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) for each of those areas updated their long-range transportation plans to reflect INDOT's preferred alternative for the I-69 project. The route approved in the

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Tier 1 ROD is currently included in the long-range transportation plans for each of the affected MPO areas.

Gibson County receives planning assistance from the Evansville Urban Transportation Study (EUTS) through an agreement with INDOT. EUTS is the designated MPO for the Evansville, Indiana-Henderson, Kentucky Urbanized Area, which includes the city of Evansville, most of Vanderburgh County, and all of Warrick County in Indiana.

EUTS adopted a *2030 Transportation Plan Update* for the Evansville-Henderson metropolitan area in 2003. This plan update includes I-69 (from SR 64 to SR 50) in its list of recommended transportation projects (project G-4) in Gibson County that will address the plan's transportation goals and objectives, which includes a comprehensive transportation system that "moves people and goods safely, . . . coordinates land use and transportation planning, . . . [and] preserves and enhances the character of the environment (p. 2-1 & 2-2)" Regarding the recommended projects, the plan notes they will "individually, and as a whole, reduce congestion, increase mobility, and enhance safety, within the rural counties in the EUTS regional planning area. The recommended projects will provide the foundation for development of a transportation network with improved access for the urban areas and industrial developments to the major roadways in the region."

The overall Purpose and Need established for I-69 in Tier 1 and Section 2's locally identified goals are consistent with and supportive of the plan's emphasis on improving the transportation network to provide increased mobility, safety, and regional access.

### **2.2.4 Other Local Plans and Studies**

The Southwest Indiana Development Council (SWIDC) *Gateway to Southwest Indiana* website (<http://www.swidc.org/>) includes proposed I-69 among the area's important transportation features, citing "relative accessibility to interstate transportation" as "key" to "solid economic development." The website references an "excellent transportation system in Southwest Indiana" that is "slated to get even better in the foreseeable future with the addition of I-69." . SWIDC is a regional economic development organization comprised of representatives from 13 counties in southwest Indiana, including Daviess, Pike, and Gibson. SWIDC promotes southwest Indiana to companies interested in expansion or relocation. Its members include representatives of local economic development organizations and chambers of commerce in each county, as well as other interested groups, such as universities, utilities, public officials, and private industry.

Daviess County is also a member of the Southern Indiana Development Commission (SIDC), which is focused on economic development, transportation, community development. Likewise,



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Pike County is a member of the Indiana 15 Regional Planning Commission, which has prepared a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and economic development opportunity maps for the member counties. Indiana 15's 2004 Annual Report includes, "the following objective: "link population centers by strategic planning for Interstate 69".under the transportation goal "to promote the effective flow of people and materials within the district (unpaged-numbered sheets)."

Additionally, Gibson County is a member of the Southwestern Indiana Regional Development Commission (SWIRDC), which was formed to facilitate multi-county strategic planning and implementation of economic development projects, including a tourism strategy and a cultural master plan. The Southwest Indiana 2000 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, which addresses Gibson and other counties, lists among its goals for 2010, "improved access and efficiency of transportation including the presence of a north-south interstate route and improved access to neighboring states (p. 9)." The report further states: "the Regional Strategy Committee supports the extension of I-69 through the southwest region and views this project as a critical component to a positive economic future in the region; [and] a well-aligned and efficient north-south interstate should be viewed as a strategic asset to the entire regional community (p.12)."

### **2.3 Needs Assessment**

#### **2.3.1 Completing Section 2 of I-69 between SR 64 west of Oakland City and US 50 east of Washington**

Building Section 2 of I-69 responds to the congressional policy to complete the National I-69 corridor. The congressional decision to designate I-69 as a "high priority corridor" was based on corridor feasibility studies and reflects a national commitment to complete this new interstate corridor as part of the National Highway System. For this reason, the Tier 1 EIS for I-69 from Evansville to Indianapolis focused on alternatives for completing I-69 as an interstate highway. The Tier 1 EIS selected a route for the project (defined as a "corridor" generally 2,000 feet in width), and divided that corridor into six sections for Tier 2-level analyses.

Based on the Tier 1 EIS and ROD, there is a need to complete I-69 as an interstate highway between Evansville and Indianapolis, including Section 2.

#### **2.3.2 Personal Accessibility**



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Access for local residents and communities has been highlighted as a key factor to be considered in choosing the final alignment for I-69 Section 2. Residents desire better access to places like Indianapolis, Bloomington, and Evansville to reach jobs, health care facilities, shopping, and recreational opportunities. Residents also desire interstate access to be able to attract new job-producing industry and out-of-town visitors who will spend money on goods and services, as well as for tourism. Following are some of the key sources that have identified increased personal accessibility as a local need:

The city of Washington and Daviess County support building an interchange at US 50. In addition, the city of Washington adopted a resolution (3-2005) on July 25, 2005 that endorses building a South Washington interchange tying to SR 57 about two miles south of the US 50 bypass. They believe the South Washington interchange location will: accommodate residents who live in the south, west, and central parts of Washington, avoiding adverse travel to reach the US 50-interchange on the far east side of town; provide good access for visitors to the community given Washington's current development focus on the south side of town at the US 50 Bypass/SR 57 intersection; as well as facilitate improved emergency access along the 12.5-mile distance between the US 50 interchange and the North Petersburg interchange..

The *Pike County Endorsed Plan of I-69 Interchanges* (pp.1-3) endorses a Petersburg interchange at SR 61. It also calls for developing two additional interchanges, one north and one south of Petersburg, to serve existing and proposed industrial land use activities that generate heavy truck traffic. The interchanges would divert this traffic from the heart of the Petersburg community. Truck traffic at the south end of the Section 2 corridor today (near SR 64 on SR 57) comprises about one-third of all traffic during the peak hour. High percentages of truck traffic also occur on other parts of SR 57 within the Section 2 corridor. Indianapolis Power & Light and Hoosier Energy facilities, which together employ over 350 persons on the north side of Petersburg, generate an estimated 1,100-plus daily truck trips on SR 57 in and out of their facilities for coal, limestone, gypsum, and vender deliveries. Additional coal truck traffic is generated in the area by the Knox County mines (trucks use SR 61) and a large Pike County underground mine (trucks use SR 56 and SR 57). The interchange on the south side of Petersburg is endorsed in order to serve brownfield redevelopment sites, developing industrial areas in the Bell's Hill area, as well as a future industrial site identified and studied by the Pike County Economic Growth Council. This plan has been endorsed by the Pike County Industrial Development and Education Alliance, the Pike County Economic Growth & Development Council, and the city of Petersburg Indiana Common Council.

The *Evansville Urban Transportation Study (EUTS) 2030 Transportation Plan* identifies the need for increased mobility for residents of the rural areas of Gibson County. I-69 will substantially increase mobility for residents of the rural communities in the Section 2 area, providing better access to jobs, medical facilities, shopping, and recreation.





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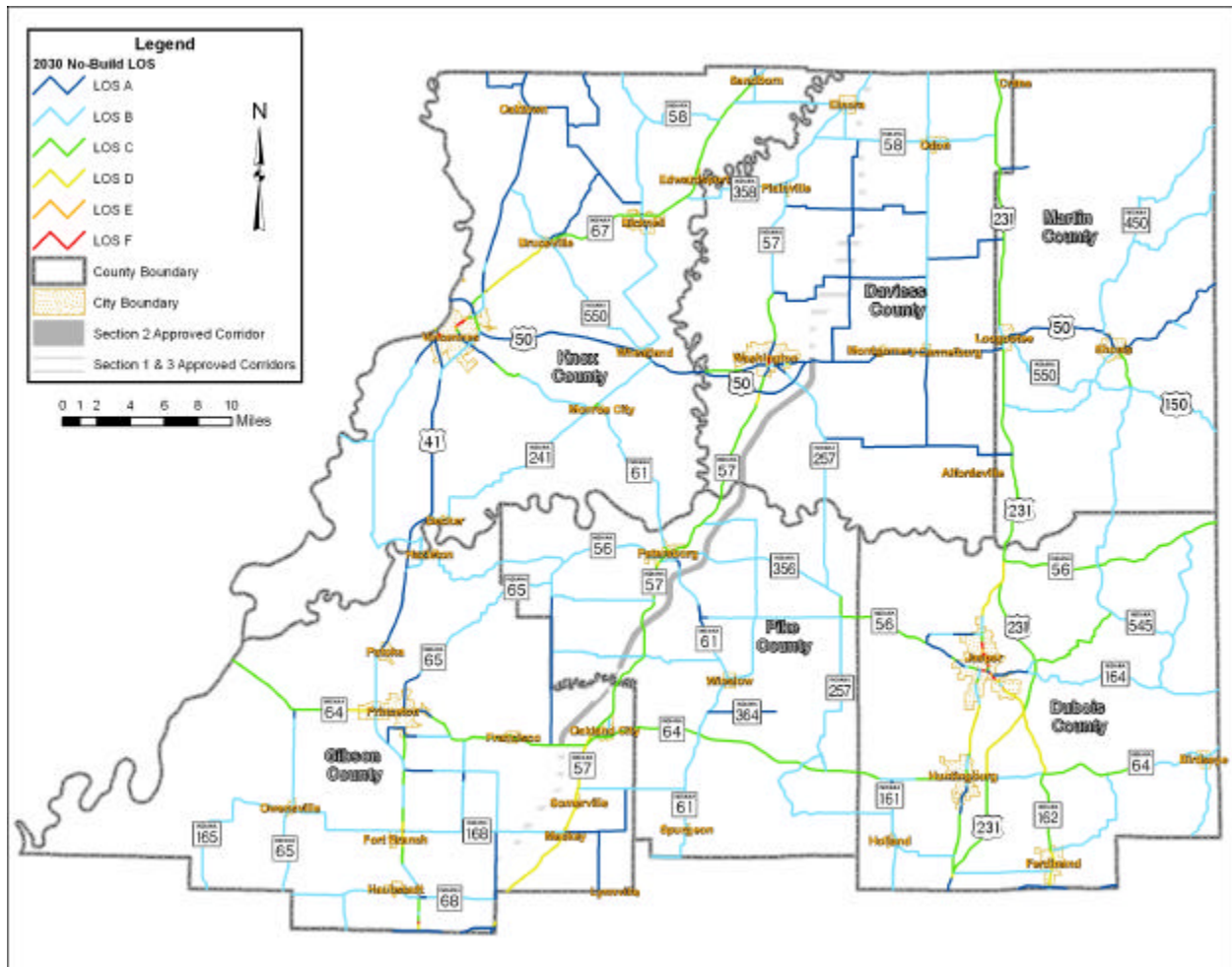
**Community Input.** Improved local access is a key need that the project can address. Visitors to the Section 2 project office and participants in the Section 2 Public Information Meeting have consistently raised the topic of better access and mobility to reach jobs, medical facilities, shopping, and recreation that interstate access will provide. Similarly, Section 2 Community Advisory Committee (CAC) members have repeatedly mentioned access to and from the community as key to attracting new jobs to the area. Access, specifically with respect to economic development, is one the most frequently mentioned goals that CAC members have raised in Section 2 CAC meetings.

#### **2.3.3 Highway Congestion**

Traffic forecasts for the year 2030 show that, under the No-Build Scenario, the Section 2 corridor will experience congestion on SR 57 at the major towns in Section 2. Level of service (LOS) is the method commonly used to evaluate a roadway's functionality. LOS is a measure of operational conditions. These conditions are defined in terms of factors such as speed and travel time, maneuverability, and delay. Six levels of service are designated by the letters "A" through "F". LOS "A" represents the most desirable operating conditions, while LOS "F" defines the least acceptable. INDOT's policies call for providing at least LOS "C" on all rural state highways. Figure 2-1 shows segments of SR 57 in the Section 2 study area forecasted (in the year 2030) to have LOS "D" or worse north of Oakland City, south of Petersburg, south of Washington, in and north of Vincennes, and in several locations within Dubois County.

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**Figure 2-1: 2030 Forecasted No-Build LOS**

In addition, SR 57 throughout the Section 2 study area has heavy volumes of truck traffic, generally traveling longer distances. Diverting this traffic to I-69 is expected to decrease, or entirely eliminate, congestion on SR 57. The following are the roads that are anticipated to have a LOS “D” or worse in the year 2030:

- ? SR 57 south of Oakland City
- ? SR 57 south of Petersburg
- ? SR 57 within, north and south of Washington
- ? US 41 at various locations in Gibson County
- ? Old US 41 in Vincennes



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- ? SR 441 in Vincennes
- ? SR 67 north of Vincennes
- ? SR 64 west of Princeton
- ? US 231 north and south of Jasper
- ? Old US 231 within, north and south of Jasper
- ? US 231 south of Huntingburg
- ? SR 162 within and southeast of Jasper
- ? SR 162 through Ferdinand

#### 2.3.4 Highway Safety

The safety analysis conducted for the Tier 1 study identified many rural counties and rural highways in southwest Indiana with above average crash rates for serious crashes.<sup>2</sup> Both Pike and Daviess Counties have crash rates well above the statewide average for rural counties. (I-69 Tier 1, Task 3.3.4.1 Technical Report, Regional Safety Analysis, Figures 2 & 3). I-69 is expected to result in diversion of traffic, including particularly heavy truck traffic, from other, less safe, rural highways to a safer freeway facility.

A driver traveling on a rural two-lane highway without access control is twice as likely to be involved in a fatal crash and four times as likely to be involved in a crash resulting in injuries, than if traveling the same distance on a fully access controlled freeway, such as an interstate highway (see Table 2-1). Travelers are much less likely to be involved in serious crashes to the extent that they can make their trips on a multi-lane, divided highway. The forecasting and analysis tools used in this study account for the diversion of traffic to new facilities, and estimate the resulting crash reductions.

Table 2-1: Crash Rate Comparison, Rural Roads		
Facility Type	Crashes per 100 Million Vehicle Miles	
	Fatal Crashes	Injury Crashes
Freeway, Full Access Control	1.2 – 1.6	24
4-Lane Divided, Partial Access Control	1.6 – 2.0	65 – 81
2-Lane	2.8 – 4.0	83 – 107
<i>Source: The Highway Economic Requirements System, Technical Report, Jack Faucett Associates for FHWA, July 1991</i>		

<sup>2</sup> A “serious” crash is one resulting in at least one fatality or serious injury.



#### **2.3.5 Local Economic Development**

Section 2 Daviess and Pike Counties, as well as adjacent Knox and Martin Counties, were designated as stressed counties by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in the Department's *FY 2004 Rural Development Indiana Strategic Plan*. Pike County ranked 89<sup>th</sup> and Knox County ranked 85<sup>th</sup> among Indiana's 92 counties for business growth between 1991 and 2001, with a 1.5 percent decrease in Pike County businesses and a 0.3 percent decrease in Knox County businesses, while the state as a whole gained 12.4 percent more businesses.

Daviess County ranked 90<sup>th</sup> of 92 Indiana counties for quality of housing stock; 86<sup>th</sup> of 92 counties for percent of individuals below the poverty level; and 88<sup>th</sup> of 92 counties for percent of individuals with high school diplomas. Knox County ranked last among all Indiana counties for population growth between 1990 and 2002, with a 3.4 percent decrease in population. Martin County, where the population count remained unchanged between 1990 and 2002, ranked 85<sup>th</sup> out of 92 for quality of housing stock and 88<sup>th</sup> for percent of individuals with high school diplomas. The counties that will be served by Section 2 clearly need increased economic activity.

The Tier 1 study of economic conditions in southwest Indiana indicated a need to enhance economic development opportunities in the region. The study evaluated the role an improved transportation system could play in addressing this need. The study concluded that improving the transportation system can lead to enhanced economic growth by reducing business costs and directly improving the economic wellbeing of individual consumers.

The Pike County Economic Growth & Development Council is working to locate industrial facilities on the north side of Petersburg in Pike County that will increase the number of jobs in the area. Also, the city of Petersburg has considered ways to capitalize on the added visitors that I-69 will bring by encouraging additional craft activities, downtown storefront enhancements, themed special events, etc. Similarly, the city of Washington in Daviess County is focused on capturing economic development with I-69 access.

Discussions with Section 2 business and property owners have indicated that they anticipate benefits to their businesses as a result of the construction of I-69. Some of the business owners have said that they may expand their businesses should the anticipated increase in customers be realized. These businesses include a broad range of operations, including, everything from windshield replacement and shipping services to telecommunications training and consulting, plus fiber optics.



#### **2.4 Public and Agency Input**

Public involvement and coordination with regulatory agencies has been extensive and ongoing since the beginning of the Tier 1 process, and is continuing through the Tier 2 study process. A variety of avenues have been used to gather input for the Section 2 Purpose and Need Statement. To date, an open house and two public information meetings have been held with the general public. Members of the project team have and continue to speak to civic and local organizations, and have met with elected officials, EMS personnel, businesses, economic development organizations and visitors to the project office. In the first year alone, over 300 stakeholders have visited the Section 2 project office. Four Community Advisory Committee Meetings have been held during the same time period. Throughout this early process several local interests have been identified as worthy of consideration during the Section 2, Tier 2 study including:

- ? Interchanges should be located to support future economic development growth and to divert heavy truck traffic from local roads
- ? Tourism opportunities should be emphasized

Among the items discussed with CAC members is the potential for developing a cultural-tourism center at the US 50/I-69 interchange. The concept is to develop a facility that could include: visitor information for tourist attractions (such as historic Vincennes, about 18 miles/20 minutes west via a four-lane partially access-controlled road (US 50); the Amish community near Montgomery, about seven miles/ten minutes east; the French Lick resort, about 38 miles/45 minutes east; etc.); displays on historic points of interest, such as the Buffalo Trace between Louisville and Vincennes, the Lincoln Trail, and the old National Highway (US 50), the Wabash & Erie Canal; a gift shop with arts & crafts, home-made foodstuffs, etc.; a food concession, perhaps operated by a local restaurateur or one of the area's many popular buffets; and possibly space for community meetings, local art display. The ten-county Four Rivers Resource Conservation and Development Area, a non-profit corporation based in Petersburg with a focus on natural resources and community development, has historically been active in tourism and arts & crafts activities and would be a candidate to operate such a facility, just as the Sycamore Trails Resource Conservation and Development Area operates a visitor center for INDOT on I-70 at Greencastle.

Chapter 11, *Coordination and Public Involvement*, contains detailed information regarding the public input process, the key issues that were raised, and how they were addressed.



### **2.5 Project Goals and Performance Measures**

Each of the alternatives considered in the Tier 2 study is essentially equal in terms of its ability to meet the broad regional objectives contained in the Tier 1 Purpose and Need Statement. Therefore, the transportation performance measures used in Tier 2 address the ability of the alternatives to meet local goals. These performance measures will be evaluated along with project impacts and costs in selecting a preferred Section 2 build alternative. It is very possible that these other relevant factors (impacts and costs) will have a more significant role than performance measures in selecting an alternative in Section 2.

As stated in sub-Section 2.1.2, **the proposed action in Section 2 supports the overall project purpose identified in Tier 1 while also addressing local needs.** In Section 2, five local goals have been identified, primarily through an extensive public involvement process that is summarized in Section 2.4. This process included comments from the general public, local officials, local business owners/managers, members of the Section 2 Community Advisory Committee, and others.

Performance measures associated with each goal have been developed to help in evaluating the alternative Section 2 alignments and in selecting a preferred alignment. The evaluation of Section 2 alternatives will consider other relevant factors, including environmental impacts, social and economic impacts, etc., in addition to the performance measures.

Section 2 goals and their performance measures are described below, and are summarized in Table 2.2. Selected alignment segments may be similar in their ability to meet some of these goals.

#### **GOAL 1: COMPLETE SECTION 2 OF I-69 BETWEEN SR 64 WEST OF OAKLAND CITY AND US 50 EAST OF WASHINGTON**

Tier 1 Goals Supported: Goals 1, 8 and 9

Performance Measure:

**G1-A** *Development of a freeway which meets current design standards.* A new freeway will be designed and built to meet current design standards. All build alternatives equally satisfy this criterion.





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#### **GOAL 2: ENHANCE THE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK IN THE SECTION 2 STUDY AREA TO IMPROVE PERSONAL ACCESSIBILITY FOR RESIDENTS OF THE AREA**

Tier 1 Goal Supported: Goal 2

Performance Measures:

**G2-A** *Increase in access of area communities to the interstate system.* To evaluate the ability of each build alternative to access the interstate system, travel distance and travel time to the interstate system from the following communities will be measured:

- ? *Gibson County:* Oakland City and Princeton
- ? *Pike County:* Petersburg and Winslow
- ? *Dubois County:* Jasper and Huntingburg
- ? *Daviess County:* Washington and Montgomery
- ? *Martin County:* Loogootee
- ? *Knox County:* Vincennes

The present distance and travel time from a community to the nearest interstate interchange will be compared with the distance and travel time to the nearest interstate upon completion of I-69. An overall measure will be derived which weights the improvement for each community by the population of each community.

**G2-B** *Reduction in travel time to regional destinations (Evansville, Bloomington, and Indianapolis).* The selected Tier 1 alternative (Alternative 3C) was found to provide significant improvement in travel time to these destinations. The quality of improved accessibility will be measured by comparing the travel time between each community identified under Goal G2-A to Evansville, Bloomington, and Indianapolis. The travel time provided under each alternative will be compared to that offered in the No-Build case.

#### **GOAL 3: REDUCE EXISTING AND FORECASTED TRAFFIC CONGESTION ON THE HIGHWAY NETWORK IN THE SECTION 2 STUDY AREA**

Tier 1 Goal Supported: Goal 3

Performance Measure:

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**G3-A** *Reduction in congestion on rural roadways.* Indicators for this goal will include the number of lane-miles of roadway and numbers of intersections in the study area operating at congested levels of service (LOS D, or lower).

#### **GOAL 4: REDUCE CRASHES ON LOCAL AND STATE ROADS IN THE SECTION 2 STUDY AREA**

Tier 1 Goal Supported: Goal 4

Performance Measure:

**G4-A** *Reduction in number of crashes in the Section 2 Study Area.* The reduction in the number of fatal, injury, and property-damage accidents in the Study Area will be calculated for each alternative.

**G4-B** *Reduction in the percentage of trucks on local roads.* Indicators for this goal will be the results of traffic modeling projections with and without the project to show that truck traffic will be diverted to the interstate, thereby reducing the potential for accidents involving heavy trucks on local roads.

#### **GOAL 5: SUPPORT LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES**

Tier 1 Goals Supported: Goals 5, 6, and 7

Performance Measures:

**G5-A** *Increase in access of area businesses to the interstate system.* To evaluate the ability of each build alternative to provide business access to the interstate system, travel distance and travel time to the interstate system from study area communities will be measured. The communities include:

- ? *Gibson County:* Oakland City and Princeton
- ? *Pike County:* Petersburg and Winslow
- ? *Dubois County:* Jasper and Huntingburg
- ? *Daviess County:* Washington and Montgomery
- ? *Martin County:* Loogootee
- ? *Knox County:* Vincennes

The present distance and travel time from a community to the nearest interstate interchange will be compared with the distance and travel time to the nearest interstate interchange upon





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completion of I-69. An overall measure will be derived which weights the improvement for each community by total employment in each community.

**G5-B** *Reduction in travel time to regional business destinations (Evansville, Bloomington, Indianapolis, and Terre Haute).* The selected Tier 1 alternative (Alternative 3C) was found to provide significant improvement in travel time to these destinations. The quality of improved accessibility will be measured by comparing the travel time between each community identified under Performance Measure G5-A to the selected regional business destinations. The travel time provided under each alternative will be compared to that offered in the No-Build case.

**G5-C** *Provision of interchange locations suitable for stimulating economic development.* Interchange locations will be rated high, medium, or low according to the degree of community commitment to furnish utilities for economic development in the area to be served by the proposed interchange and the specificity of development plans.

The goals and performance measures associated with the Purpose and Need for Section 2 are summarized in Table 2.2.

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**TABLE 2.2—SECTION 2 GOALS AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

TIER 1	TIER 2 Section 2	
	Section 2 Goals	Section 2 Performance Measures
<b>GOAL 1</b> —Improve the transportation linkage between Evansville and Indianapolis  <b>GOAL 8</b> —Facilitate interstate and international movement of freight  <b>GOAL 9</b> —Connect I-69 to major intermodal facilities in southwest Indiana	GOAL 1—Complete Section 2 of I-69 between SR 64 east of Oakland City to US 50 west of Washington	G1-A—Development of a freeway which meets current needs
GOAL 2—Improve personal accessibility for southwest Indiana residents	GOAL 2—Enhance the transportation network in the Section 2 Study Area to improve personal accessibility for residents of the area	G2-A—Increase in access of area communities to the I-69 corridor
		G2-B—Reduction in travel time to regional destinations (Indianapolis)
GOAL 3—Reduce existing and forecasted traffic congestion on the highway network in southwest Indiana	GOAL 3—Reduce existing and forecasted traffic congestion on the highway network in the Section 2 Study Area	G3-A—Reduction in congestion on rural roadways.
GOAL 4—Improve safety levels in southwest Indiana	GOAL 4—Reduce crashes on local and state roads in the Section 2 Study Area	G4-A—Reduction in the number of crashes in the Section 2 Study Area
		G4-B—Reduction in the percentage of trucks on local roads
<b>GOAL 5</b> —Increase accessibility for southwest Indiana businesses to labor, suppliers, and consumer markets  <b>GOAL 6</b> —Support sustainable, long-term economic growth.  <b>GOAL 7</b> —Support economic development to benefit a wide spectrum of area residents.	GOAL 5—Support local economic development initiatives	G5-A—Increase in access of area businesses to the I-69 corridor
		G5-B—Reduction in travel time to regional business destinations (Indianapolis, and Terra Haute)
		G5-C—Provision of interchange locations suitable for future development